

religious freedom, the rule of law, democratic governance, and the preservation of individual rights. During my first official trip abroad as Senator, I traveled to Israel and saw firsthand the sacrifices Israeli people make to protect these principles. This visit helped me better understand the urgent need for sustainable peace in the Middle East and Israel's vulnerability within the region.

The United States shares Israel's desire to protect their thriving democracy, and we honor our commitment by supporting security efforts in Israel. Since 1948, Israel has been a reliable and steadfast ally to the United States, and our support helps to ensure the security of its territory and citizens. A strong and healthy relationship with Israel is critical to the endurance of democracy in the greater Middle East and the United States will continue to stand with Israel to ensure its survival, peace and prosperity.

I extend my greetings to all those taking part in celebrations to mark this historic week for Israel. In my home State of Florida, the home to thousands of individuals of Jewish descent, today is especially important. It marks the day a permanent home was established for a people who suffered tremendously for generations because of their ethnicity and religious beliefs.

So during this momentous time, I offer the people of Israel and its many friends around the world my best wishes and the hope for continued prosperity.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the 2000 year search for a Jewish homeland concluded on May 14, 1948, with the declaration of an independent State of Israel. But, the birth of Israel on that day was far from easy. Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion made his first radio broadcast the following day from an air raid shelter as the precarious new nation came under attack.

Even as a war was being launched against their young nation, Israel's founding father took the time to remind the first citizens of Israel what had been accomplished and what it would take to defend their dream. Ben-Gurion said, "whatever we have achieved is the result of the efforts of earlier generations no less than our own. It is also the result of an unwavering fidelity to our precious heritage, the heritage of a small nation that has suffered much, but at the same time has won for itself a special place in the history of mankind because of its spirit, faith, and vision."

The United States has played a critical role in the development of Israel over the past 60 years. President Harry S. Truman, the first head of state to grant Israel diplomatic recognition, expressed its special place in the hearts of Americans as he declared, "I had faith in Israel before it was established, and I have faith in it now. I believe it has a glorious future before it—not just another sovereign nation, but as an embodiment of the great ideals of our

civilization." This special partnership which began with Israel's creation has been repeatedly tested since 1948. The United States has been steadfast in our commitment to helping the people of Israel develop their own economy and secure their own peace. We have helped give them the time that their founding fathers knew was needed to secure their future.

A decade ago, in celebration of Israel's 50th anniversary, I traveled there for an international conference of Jewish legislators from around the world. In our discussions, I saw then that the philosophy that was embraced by Ben-Gurion and other visionary leaders helped Israel become a dynamic democracy with a thriving economy. In the decade since that conference, Israel has come within a few breaths of a peace agreement and also experienced episode after episode of violence carried out against its civilians. Still, Israel's faith and fortitude remain as strong today as they were when the dream was realized six decades ago.

In recognition of Israel's remarkable history, I was pleased to be a cosponsor of S. Res. 522, which the Senate unanimously passed late last month. The resolution acknowledges the 60th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel and reaffirms the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the United States and Israel. This is a fitting tribute to Israel's past, and we all hope that our nations' mutual goodwill augurs well for future positive and peaceful developments in Israel, in the Middle East and around the world.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise today joining my colleagues in congratulating our friends in Israel as they celebrate the 60th anniversary of their independence and modern-day founding.

Sixty years ago, Missouri's own President Harry S. Truman signed the telegram making the United States the first Nation on the Earth to recognize officially the State of Israel. Since that time, Israel and the United States have stood side by side on many issues and have shared common bonds and values that unite us still today.

I daresay that no country has faced such adversity and strife during such a short period of time. Our staunchest ally in the region has persevered against enemy invasions, random terror attacks, and saber rattling throughout its short existence and has grown stronger as a result.

As a Member of this body, I have been proud to support joint U.S. and Israeli programs aimed at strengthening our mutual defense and cooperation. We are engaged in a war against a common enemy that seeks to further its agenda through suicide bombings, the targeting of innocents, and the destruction of the civilized world. The United States and Israel recognize that without freedom, respect for human rights, and liberty, we are lost.

Today, I congratulate and offer my sincere thanks to the people of Israel

for being our ally during trying times and a friend upon whom we can always count.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, may I inquire what is the business before the Senate?

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

FLOOD INSURANCE REFORM AND MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2007

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2284, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2284) to amend the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, to restore the financial solvency of the flood insurance fund, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Dodd/Shelby amendment No. 4707, in the nature of a substitute.

McConnell amendment No. 4720 (to the text of the bill proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 4707), of a perfecting nature.

Allard amendment No. 4721 (to amendment No. 4720), of a perfecting nature.

Landrieu/Nelson (FL) modified amendment No. 4706 (to amendment No. 4707), to improve the Office of the Flood Insurance Advocate.

Nelson (FL) amendment No. 4709 (to amendment No. 4707), to establish a National Catastrophe Risks Consortium and a National Homeowners' Insurance Stabilization Program.

DeMint amendment No. 4711 (to amendment No. 4707), to require the Director to conduct a study on the impact, effectiveness, and feasibility of amending section 1361 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 to include widely used and nationally recognized building codes as part of the flood plain management criteria developed under such section.

DeMint modified amendment No. 4710 (to amendment No. 4707), to end the premium subsidy for any property purchased after the date of enactment of this act.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I wish to inform my colleagues we are open for business. I know there are amendments that Members have they would like to be considered. I am more than happy, with my colleague, the ranking member, Senator SHELBY, to try to consider those amendments and deal with them expeditiously.

Last evening, we entered a unanimous consent agreement which requires that all amendments be offered,